



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: March 8, 2011

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Creeks Division, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: Resolution To Apply For Grant Funding For Construction Of Mission Creek Fish Passage Project – Phase II

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council adopt, by reading of title only, A Resolution of the Council of the City of Santa Barbara Authorizing the Parks and Recreation Director to Apply for Up to \$1,900,000 in Grant Funds from the California Department of Fish and Game Fisheries Restoration Grant Program for the Mission Creek Fish Passage Project – Construction Phase II.

DISCUSSION:

Introduction

Over the last five years, the Creeks Division has worked with the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Santa Barbara County Flood Control District, Environmental Defense Center, and community members to remove barriers to endangered steelhead trout migration and restore riparian habitat in Mission Creek.

Mission Creek is considered the most viable stream for steelhead trout restoration in the City of Santa Barbara. Mission Creek contains high quality spawning and rearing habitat within the stream channels in the mid and upper watershed, and currently has an existing population of rainbow trout (freshwater version of steelhead trout). Mission Creek also has a documented historic run of steelhead trout, and in seven of the last ten years, steelhead trout have been recorded attempting to migrate upstream without success due to barriers within the stream channel.

The large concrete flood control channels along Mission Creek, known as the "CalTrans Channels", are significant barriers to upstream steelhead trout migration. Removing these barriers will help provide access for steelhead trout to 3.9 miles of creek channel, which include two miles of moderate to high quality spawning and rearing habitat. Phase I of the construction will involve modifications to the upper (.3 mile long) channel, and Phase II will

involve modifications to the lower (.8 mile long) channel. Phase I is scheduled for construction during the summer of 2011. Pending available funds, Phase II will be constructed during the summer of 2012.

Because Mission Creek is a seasonal creek, the ability of fish to swim through the constructed passage will be limited to periods of time during rainfall and for short periods of time after the succession of rainfall when there is sufficient flow in the creek. Although it may be feasible to augment water flows in the creek by making releases of water from Gibraltar Reservoir, such action would have a significant negative impact to the City's water supplies. No requirement for Gibraltar water releases is contemplated in the construction and maintenance of this project.

The Creeks Division is planning to submit an application for Phase II construction funding to the CDFG's Fisheries Restoration Grant Program by the March 15, 2011 deadline. The Fisheries Restoration Grant Program has substantial funding in the 2011 grant cycle from voter-approved Proposition 84. CDFG requires a Resolution from the City Council as part of the grant application package.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL:

The project engineer estimates Phase II construction costs to be \$2,800,000. The Creeks Division will be requesting approximately \$1,900,000 in grant funding through the Fisheries Restoration Grant Program. The remaining amount would be funded with a combination of Measure B matching funds and other grant sources.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

The purpose of the project is to improve steelhead trout migration in Mission Creek when there is adequate water in the creek to allow the creek to flow. These efforts will contribute to local, regional, and federal objectives of removing migration barriers for the federally endangered steelhead trout.

PREPARED BY: Cameron Benson, Creeks Restoration/Clean Water Manager

SUBMITTED BY: Nancy L. Rapp, Parks and Recreation Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office